

and helped to precipitate the war's end in August 1945. I should also note that, following the war's end, the United States and Japan entered into a long period of geopolitical alliance, cultural goodwill, and economic partnership, and to this day we count the Japanese people among our closest friends in the world community—a fortunate result stemming from a long and difficult war.

As rifleman, Roy Rowe fought alongside his fellow soldiers to secure Okinawa as a base for launching an attack on Japan. He was awarded numerous decorations for his service, including the Purple Heart, the Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon, the American Theater of Operation Ribbon, and the Silver Star Medal. Mr. Rowe's service ended in October 1945, three years after it had begun. His is a service record that he can be proud of, and we're proud of him for it. Through his service to his country and his willingness to endure great personal sacrifice to defend our freedoms, Roy Rowe represents the most admirable qualities in the American spirit.

In this new century, in these difficult times, when a new generation of young Americans is taking up arms to defend our freedoms against the threats posed by international terrorism and rogue nations, let's remember Roy Rowe's example of courage, patriotism and selflessness. I am honored to pay tribute to him on the floor of the Senate today.●

NCAA TOURNAMENT

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for the past few days my friends and fellow Senators have repeatedly been asking me one question: What in the world is a catamount? Today I am delighted to answer that question by explaining what a catamount is, what it takes to be a catamount and why it is so fitting that the University of Vermont chose the catamount as its mascot.

On Saturday, March 15, the 2003 University of Vermont men's basketball team defined "catamount" for college basketball fans throughout the great State of Vermont and the Nation. These determined young men, from four different countries and nine states, including Vermont, took victory Saturday afternoon against No. 1-seeded Boston University in a close 56-to-55 game, becoming the 2003 American East Conference Men's Basketball Champions and earning themselves a chance to play in the national championship tournament—the "big dance," March Madness—the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship Tournament. This is the first time the UVM men's basketball team has taken the title and made it to the national tournament in the program's 103-year history.

It is only appropriate that the catamount, a type of cougar known for its athletic ability, including its speed and

its ability to jump, is the emblem of these hard-working and talented young men. The catamount was once thought to be extinct from the Green Mountains of Vermont. Like the division title for men's basketball, it had not been seen in Vermont for more than 100 years. But within the last decade, the people of Vermont have started seeing the mountain cat in our beautiful mountains. And it was only a little over a decade ago that the fans of UVM basketball saw the UVM Catamounts come within one game of the division title. One of my former staffers, Bill Bright, played on the team from 1987 to 1991 and was at that game on March 10, 1990. But the title eluded Vermont and Bill Bright.

Last Saturday, the UVM squad proved that catamounts do exist. Their dramatic victory came on a last-second shot by sophomore David Hehn at Boston University's Case Gymnasium. The Burlington Free Press quoted David Hehn after the game as saying: "For all the guys in this room, this is our dream." Vermont was the only team in the Nation this year to win a conference title on their opponent's home court.

Members of my staff, including a senior counsel on the Senate Judiciary Committee and a member of the Catamount's 1981 through 1985 squads, Ed Pagano, gathered last weekend to watch the game on ESPN, and you can be sure we will be watching again Thursday as they play their first game in the NCAA tournament. Many Vermonters, including my good friend Mary Anne Gucciardi—known by many on the UVM squad as Momma Gucci—will be clearing their schedules Thursday to watch history in the making in the first round of the tournament.

Coach Tom Brennan, who is in his 17th season with UVM, led these young men to victory. I have had many conversations with Coach Brennan, both personal and professional. He is the co-host of a popular radio show in Vermont. In a Burlington Free Press interview he said, "I just kept believing this day would come, I have been treated so wonderfully at Vermont. . . . To be able to give that back and say 'Here, this is for you' it's the most incredible feeling that I've had in a long, long time."

I find it fitting that the two Vermonters on this year's team were so instrumental in the team's championship run. Sophomore Taylor Coppenrath of West Barnet was given the Reggie Lewis Award for being the America East Player of the Year, and junior Matt Sheftic of Essex Junction won the Kevin Roberson Most Valuable Player Award for his exceptional performance in the America East Tournament.

The conference title means the University of Vermont has secured its first-ever berth in the NCAA Tournament in the competition's 64-year history or, as the Free Press called it, UVM's "First Dance." On Thursday,

March 20, they will travel to the University of Utah in Salt Lake City to face the University of Arizona Wildcats. The Wildcats are this year's Pac-10 regular-season champion, and this will be their 19th consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance. Like Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys fighting for our freedom, the Catamounts know the Wildcats are well-groomed for the match, but they are determined to play their best against the goliath Wildcats.

I called Coach Brennan and the team to wish them luck before Saturday's game and again Sunday as they found out who they would be facing in the tournament. The team is excited and energized for their trip to Utah and to face one of the Nation's top-ranked teams. Coach Brennan says, "We're going to do the very best we can, we're going to enjoy it."

I would like to add that the entire State of Vermont is going to enjoy it. And I would like to thank Coach Brennan, the Athletic Department at UVM, our student-athletes and their families for giving so much to the State and to the fans of Catamount Basketball.●

TRIBUTE TO THE STUDENTS OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT SCHOOL AND JAMIE DIEBEL

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the students of St. Albert the Great School in Louisville, KY.

In September of 2001, 13-year old student Jamie Deibel was diagnosed with leukemia. Jamie was unable to attend school with her classmates all last year since she was frequently in and out of the hospital. Jamie's treatment forced her to lose her hair twice. Even though she will be in treatment until next January, Jamie fortunately feels well enough to attend class at St. Albert's and participate on the volleyball, softball, basketball, and swim teams.

Jamie's friends at St. Albert showed their support for their classmate this week by raising money for the National Childhood Cancer Foundation. In a show of solidarity with Jamie, more than 60 students shaved their heads to donate their hair to Locks of Love. Locks of Love makes wigs for children like Jamie who have lost their hair due to cancer treatments and other reasons. Beauticians from all over Louisville donated their services for this worthwhile cause. Students, teachers, and parents from St. Albert have so far raised over \$3,500 and hope to raise at least \$5,000 for the National Childhood Cancer Foundation.

I ask that my fellow colleagues join me in honoring Jamie's courage and the gracious efforts of the students from St. Albert to support one of their classmates. I believe we all can learn from St. Albert's example of caring for and serving others. My thoughts and prayers are with Jamie and her classmates.●